

**"AT JESUS' FEET." A SERIES
OF PAPERS
ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE,
LIFE, AND WORK**

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"At Jesus' feet." A series of papers on Christian doctrine, life, and work by R. C. Morgan

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“ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED.”  
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“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.”—Eph. i. 5, 6.

**I**T is a pleasant thing to be accepted of men. One of the blessings of Asher is that he shall be acceptable to his brethren. A thrill of joy ran through the heart of Nabal’s wife when David received her present and said, “Go up in peace to thy house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and accepted thy person.” And it was one of the many crowns of gladness upon the head of that man of sorrow, Mordecai, that he was “great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren.”

But acceptance with our brethren is as nought compared with being accepted of God. There will

be no stability to the favour in which we may be held by men, except it rest upon acceptance with God. It was a kingly blessing wherewith Araunah as a king did bless the king: "The Lord thy God accept thee" (2 Sam. xxiv. 23).

The blessing of Naphtali—"O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord"—precedes the acceptableness to his brethren which was promised to Asher and his tribe (Deut. xxxiii. 23, 24). The apostle observes this order—"acceptable to God, and approved of men" (Rom. xiv. 18), even as Jesus "grew in stature, and in favour with God and men."

Acceptance with God, however, has from the beginning been striven after by vain oblations. Cain sought it by bringing for an offering the fruits which he, a fallen creature, had obtained by the sweat of his brow from an earth accursed for his father's sin. And his pharisaic children from generation to generation have followed in his steps, although prophets and apostles have testified against them: "When they fast I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt-offering and an oblation, I will not accept them." "Will He regard your persons? saith the Lord of hosts. Who is there among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand." "Thus have they loved to wander,

they have not refrained their feet ; therefore the Lord doth not accept them." "Woe unto them ! for they have gone in the way of Cain " (Jer. xiv. ; Mal. i. ; Jude 11).

But while his elder brother was rejected, Abel was accepted, because he came under the cover of another's blood : clothed in the spotless righteousness of the Lamb of God, whose atoning sacrifice, however dimly, he by faith foresaw, "*by faith* Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."

God's true children too often fall into the way of Cain. The foolish and bewitched Galatians, having begun in the Spirit, sought to be perfected in the flesh ; and who is there whose countenance has not fallen, when unto him and unto his offering God had not respect, because he came not with it in the only name of Jesus ? From first to last, to the praise of the glory of his grace, God hath made us accepted only in the Beloved.

It is a life-long work to learn that loving lesson, that we are complete in Him ; and yet in many a similitude the Spirit speaks it to us through his Word.

God taught it in rather a humbling way to Job's three friends, when he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "Take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering ; and my servant Job shall pray for you ; *for him will I accept* : lest I deal



with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of Me the thing which is right, like my servant Job." God would not look at them as they were in themselves ; but for the sake of Job He would accept them. "He shall pray for you, and him (his person) will I accept." The friends of Jesus do not always speak of God the thing which is right, as did his elect and righteous Servant, the Perfect and Upright Man Christ Jesus, who feared God and eschewed evil ; and God the Judge of all must deal with them according to their folly, were they not accepted in the Beloved, who ever liveth to make intercession for them, and whom He will accept.

The thoughts entertained of Job by his three friends were just those of Israel toward Jesus: "We did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." They thought of him somewhat as the barbarians thought of Paul, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, vengeance suffereth not to live." But God justifies and glorifies Job, giving him twice as much as he had before ; and when, convinced of their folly, Eliphaz and his companions humble themselves before Job and confess his righteousness, they lend an added lustre to his glory, and God accepts them in his servant Job, to the praise of the glory of his grace. God has justified and glorified his Son Jesus, and given him twice as much as He had before—has added to the glory

which He had with the Father before the world was, the glory due to the Faithful One, who with infinitely more truth than Job could say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him;" and who said upon the cross, "O my God, I cry in the daytime, but Thou hearest not; and in the night season, and there is nothing done to cause me to be silent: *but THOU art holy.*" (Ps. xxii.)

His friends were they who had continued with Him in his temptations (Luke xxii. 28), though they often doubted and misunderstood Him, and judged Him wrongfully; yea, forsook and denied Him in the hour of his need; but they *are* his friends, and when they bow before Him are they not accepted for his sake? Yea, verily. When Thomas Didymus, the double-minded and unstable man, has seen the opened side of Christ, and cried, "My Lord and my God!" the Father regards him not according to his former unbelief, but accepts him for the sake of his Beloved Son; and who shall measure the grace wherewith the God of glory graces him who worships as his Lord and God the rejected Son of his love?

Who can estimate the value in the sight of God of Peter's testimony to his Lord?—"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who when He was reviled reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the

tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness ; by whose stripes we were healed."

Every word was a blow in the face of his own self-love, and sprang from the recollection of his grievous fall ; for guile had been found in Peter's mouth ; when reviled he reviled again ; when he suffered he not only threatened but used his sword, because he committed not himself to Him that judgeth righteously. The wonderful emphasis of that imperishable sentence—"who *his own self* bare *our* sins in *his own body* on the tree," has a force from Peter's lips which no other apostle could have given it ; for it was written, we cannot doubt, in vivid remembrance of that night on which, after Jesus had washed Peter's feet, the self-confident disciple declared, "I will lay down *my* life for *thy* sake," and redeemed his promise by thrice denying Him before the cock crowed in the morning. Now Peter denies himself, for he has found that although he must follow Him "afterwards," his Lord must first lay down his life for Peter's sake, before the disciple can lay down his life for Him. Did the righteous Father regard Peter according to his own merit, either when he denied his Lord, or when he wrote that wonderful ascription to his praise ? or does He accept him according to the excellence of Him "who *his own self* bare *our* sins in *his own body* on the tree" ?

God loves to hear from human lips the praises of his Son ; and the poor lost one who looks to the